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The New Indian Express
Wishes its readers a
HAPPY Diwali
Our offices and press will remain closed today and there will be no issue of the paper on Wednesday

35% HIGHER INTAKE OF STUDENTS FROM INDIA IN U.S. COLLEGES LAST YR

The number of Indian students enrolling in US colleges last year went up by 35%, rebounding from a pandemic slump. It was an all-time high

CHINA STILL ON TOP OF THE NUMBERS GAME

China still accounts for the most international students in the US, with 2.90 lakh last year compared to India's 2.69 lakh. But China's numbers are down for the third consecutive year, according to the Open Doors 2023 report. Overall, the number of foreign students in the US grew by 12% in the 2022-23 academic year, the biggest single-year increase in over 40 years

INTL STUDENTS PREFER GRADUATE COURSES

- Most Indian students are admitted to graduate programmes, often in science, technology and business courses | P9
- For the second consecutive year, America's grad programmes were the main attraction for foreign students. It reverses a trend from the previous decade, which saw undergraduates come in larger numbers

1 million

STUDENTS CAME FROM ABROAD TO THE U.S. LAST YR, THE MOST SINCE 2019-20

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

3 ft dia pipe to be pushed in for rescue

All 40 trapped workers safe; collapse occurred between 205 m and 265 m on Silkyara side on Sunday at 5.30 am

NARENDRA SETHI @ Dehradun

WITH part of an under-construction tunnel collapsing in Uttarkashi on Sunday following landslides, trapping about 40 workers in its wake, operations are on to clear the debris and rescue them. All workers are safe and are being provided food and oxygen through pre-existing pipes.

The accident happened in the Silkyara side of the tunnel that would terminate at Barkot when it is complete.

The Union road transport ministry said the caving in began at 5.30 am when about 40 workers were inside the tunnel doing reprofiling work 260-265 metre from the Silkyara portal. A collapse occurred between 205 metres and 260 metres, trapping all 40 workers, the statement said.

Rescue teams have cleared debris up to 28 metres; rubble from about 32 metres more needs to removed. The problem is fresh mud keeps falling as the rubble gets cleared.

To prevent that, rescuers are doing what is called shotcreting (concrete spraying) with machines, which is a time-consuming process.

After discussions with experts and inspection of the behaviour of the fallen muck at the site, the Union ministry said it has been decided to push 3 ft diameter steel pipes through the rest of the debris with the help of a hydraulic jack to evacuate the workers.

Specialised machines

While excavation with shotcreting (concrete spraying) for 40 metres of collapsed tunnel has started, another shotcrete machine has been shifted to the work site, the Union road transport ministry said

The tunnel is quite wide. It has an excavated diameter of 15.3 metres and finished diameter of 12.77 metres.

Parallelly, the National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation has recalled its former General Manager Colonel Deepak Patil, who was transferred to Jaipur from Uttarkashi just last week — on November 6 — to lead the rescue operations. Col Patil had monitored the project for five years before his transfer. He will be airlifted from Dehradun to the Barkot disaster site on Tuesday morning.

About 2,340 metres of the tunnel from the Silkyara side and 1,750 metres from Barkot side have already been built. Just 441 metres of the 4531-metre tunnel is yet to excavated.

The Silkyara-Barkot distance by road is about 25.6 km, which the tunnel aims to reduce to just 4.5 km, cutting travel time from 50 minutes to 5 minutes. It's is part of the Chardham project for all-weather seamless connectivity for pilgrims.

District Magistrate Abhishek Rohilla said, "Health department teams are stationed at the tunnel gate with experts and proper medical equipment, ambulances. In case of any adverse situation, hospitals in adjoining districts and AIIMS Rishikesh have been put on high alert."

New criminal law bills a copy-paste job, say Oppn MPs

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

AS the three Bills replacing the existing criminal laws are set to be taken up in the winter session of Parliament starting December 4, eight opposition MPs recorded their dissent.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs adopted its reports on the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam earlier this month and submitted them to Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar on Saturday.

The Opposition MPs who filed dissent notes are Congress' Digvijaya Singh, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, P Chidambaram, and Ravneet Singh; TMC's Derek O'Brien and Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar; and DMK's Dayanidhi Maran and N R Elango.

The MPs said the Bills were "largely a copy and paste" of the existing laws and opposed their Hindi names, saying the move was an affront to the non-Hindi speaking people.

93% of existing law intact: TMC

TMC's O'Brien said 93% of existing laws remain intact, 18 out of 22 chapters have been copy-pasted, implying the existing laws could have been tweaked to incorporate these changes

Calling it as a "wasteful exercise that will have many undesirable consequences, former minister P Chidambaram said: "All that the Bills have done is to make a few amendments (some acceptable, some not acceptable), rearrange the sections of the existing laws, and merge different sections into one section with many sub-sections", adding that under Article 348 of the Constitution, all Acts shall be in the English language.

The three Bills seek to replace the Indian Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Evidence Act. In his dissent note, Chowdhury, leader of the Congress in the Lok Sabha, said, "The law is vastly the same. Only renumbered and rearranged.

The MPs also pointed out important stakeholders such as state governments, Bar Associations, state and central police, the National Law School Universities, judges of the subordinate judiciary, eminent retired judges of the SC and the High Courts, or legal scholars were not consulted.

49K women GP members to be trained in leadership skills

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @ Bengaluru

TO help women gram panchayat members hone leadership skills, the state government will conduct a residential training programme to over 49,000 such members from November 16. There are over 6,000 gram panchayats and nearly one lakh members in the state.

Of the members, 49,000 are women. The programme will be held by Abdul Nazir Sab State Institute of Rural Development (ANSSIRD) under the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj (RDPR) Department at various centres across the state. Around 40 members of four to six gram panchayats will be trained in each centre.

K Lakshmi Priya, Director of ANSSIRD, told *The New Indian Express* that probably it is for the first time in the country that such a training programme for women gram panchayat members is being held in the state.

A training module has been designed in consultation with various stakeholders, including NGOs.

CONTINUED ON: P4

IIMs under Centre, Prez to pick directors

KAVITA BAJELI-DATT @ New Delhi

THE Centre appears to have taken control of the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) as it notified new norms for the appointment of the board of governors and directors in these prestigious, autonomous institutes.

The new norms make the President of India the Visitor of each IIM, giving the government the final say in the appointment of the chairperson of the board and the director.

The government also changed the eligibility criteria for IIM directors. Under the new norms, applicants should have first class degrees in both Bachelor's and Master's, along with a PhD or an equivalent qualification from a reputed institute.

Earlier, the criteria used to be a "distinguished academic with PhD or equivalent." There was also no mention of the required division for the degrees earlier. It may be recalled that the appointment Dheeraj Sharma as IIM-Rohtak director was mired in controversy, as he had a second division in his Bachelor's.

The President will now have the powers to appoint and remove directors and dissolve the boards, if need be.

"Provided that where the Visitor is not satisfied with the names recommended by the Board, he or she may ask the Board to make fresh recommendations. If the Visitor is not satisfied with the panel of names recommended by the Board, the Board shall get a fresh panel of three names recommended through the same search-cum-selection committee or a fresh search-cum-selection committee," the notification issued by the Centre read.

Earlier, the board was solely responsible for the appointment of the director. Also, there was no such clause for the dissolution of the board earlier. The President is the Visitor of all the central universities and IITs and appoints their vice-chancellors and directors.

The concept of a Visitor in IIMs first found a mention in the draft of the present Act released by the government in 2015. However, the IIMs had resisted the move, saying it would put a question mark on their autonomous powers.

The new norms give the Centre significant powers to appoint / dissolve IIM boards.

FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

College students light diyas to celebrate Deepavali festival in Dharwad on Monday | EXPRESS

Stray dog on Goa airport runway, Vistara flight returns to Bengaluru

S LALITHA @ Bengaluru

INSTEAD of the usual 1.20-hour journey from Bengaluru to Goa, nearly 180 flyers of a Vistara flight on Monday landed at the Dabolim airport 5.5 hours late.

The reason for this was that the flight reached the Dabolim Navy Airbase on time, but was sent back to Bengaluru due to "wildlife movement" on the runway, according to two individuals representing Vistara.

According to Vistara, Flight UK 881 left Terminal 2 of Kempegowda International Airport at 12.55 pm and returned at 3.05 pm. The Airbus A-320 aircraft took off again at 4.55 pm and reached Goa at 6.15 pm.

A flyer said refuelling was done at KIA for an hour before its second take-off.

According to Dabolim airport sources, "Just as UK 881 approached the airport, a stray dog was spotted on the runway by the ground staff. The air traffic control alerted the pilot of the flight not to land immediately. This is a standard procedure done until the ground staff clear the runway. However, we don't know why the pilot decided to return to Bengaluru."

CONTINUED ON: P4

RESHUFFLE

Sunak sacks home secy, names former PM to cabinet

YESHI SELI @ New Delhi

FORMER British Prime Minister David Cameron has been appointed as the new foreign secretary, replacing James Cleverly who has been made the new home secretary as the incumbent Suella Braverman was sacked for her controversial media article.

Cameron's appointment comes as a surprise as he has not been in active politics since he stepped down as UK's prime minister in 2016 after losing the Brexit vote, having campaigned for the UK to remain in the European Union.

David Cameron

Suella Braverman

India's foreign minister S Jaishankar, who is on an official visit to the UK, met the new foreign secretary on Monday and held a discussion on "realising the full potential of our strategic partnership".

UK's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak had to rejig his cabinet and sack Suella Braverman after she wrote an article accusing the police of being soft in its treatment of protesters at pro-Palestinian demonstrations who engage in aggression and break the law. She also said that the organisers of the protest had links to terrorist groups, including Hamas and called the protesters 'hate marchers'.

After her broadside, there were calls from her party and the opposition to replace her.

'Veerappan territory' is now open to tourists

K SHIVA KUMAR @ Mysuru

NINETEEN years after the death of forest brigand Veerappan, the forest terrains at Gopinatham, where he was operating, are now open to the public with the forest department launching a jungle safari in the Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary.

People visiting the Male Mahadeshwara Temple or the Hogenakkal Falls can make use of this facility from 6am to 9.30am and 4pm to 6.30pm. This facility is aimed at attracting tourists on the lines of Bandipur and BR Hills safari.

Tourists take a safari ride near Male Mahadeshwara Hills | EXPRESS

The forest office at Gopinatham has the bust of martyred IFS officer P Srinivas, who was beheaded by Veerappan in 1991. The safari, which was introduced on an experimental basis in August, was inaugurated a few days ago. A sum of Rs 5 crore to promote eco-tourism in the Gopinatham region was earmarked in the budget presented by the Yeddyurappa government.

The safari now attracts people not only from Karnataka, but also from Tamil Nadu, Kerala and other parts of the country. The fee charged is Rs 500 per person and Rs 300 for children aged below six. The sanctuary is home to leopards, elephants, sambar deer, bears and other animals. Once a "no go" area because of the brigand, Gopinatham is now bustling with tourists.

People of Gopinatham and nearby villages expressed the hope that the new safari will bring more tourists and thereby help boost the local economy.

EXPRESS READ

Women can show digi proof for free bus ride

Bengaluru: Women passengers can travel in state government buses under the Shakti scheme by producing their local domicile proof on their phone using the Digilocker app. Women passengers travelling in state corporation buses like KSRTC, KKRTC and NWKRTC had repeatedly complained to the authorities concerned that conductors were insisting on them buying tickets if they failed to carry original IDs or photocopies. P6

Nine from two families killed in Hyderabad fire

Hyderabad: Nine people belonging to two families died of asphyxiation and burns while another person was injured in a major fire in a residential building in the Nampally area here on Monday. Ten people were found in an unconscious condition on different floors of the apartment complex, which has ground and four upper floors. Twenty-one people were trapped on different floors of the building. P5